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ABSTRACT

This project was designed and implemented to help facilitate the addition of a high school program to an existing independent elementary/middle school by promotion of a ninth grade at the target school and its eventual transfer to a new independent high school. An objective of the project was to see if 40 percent of parents from independent schools other than the target school would, when surveyed, indicate a high level of interest in an independent high school in this location. Other goals were for the Community High School Board to demonstrate satisfaction with the parent survey; for 20 percent of eighth-grade students from two independent schools to indicate possible interest in attending the target ninth-grade program; and for the education committee of the Community High School to create important documents and plans for the school. The parents responded to key questions on a survey designed to show levels of interest; the board attended a presentation of survey data and filled out an evaluation rubric; the eighth graders attended an informational presentation and requested admissions packets; and the education committee wrote a mission statement and guiding principles and identified crucial elements of the Community High School. All the project objectives were met as well as additional accomplishments that helped organize and motivate the new high school. Appendixes include a letter from the headmaster of the target school to the founder of the Community High School; the parent interest survey; data from the survey; the survey presentation evaluation rubric; the mission statement and guiding principles of the Community High School; and a student survey. (JMD)

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PROMOTING THE SUCCESSFUL ADDITION OF A HIGH SCHOOL TO AN EXISTING INDEPENDENT ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL: SHORT RANGE AND LONG RANGE PLANNING

by

Janice L. Nepon-Sixt

A Final Report submitted to the faculty of the Fischler Center for the Advancement of Education of Nova Southeastern University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Educational Specialist.

An abstract of this report may be placed in the University database system for reference.

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Abstract

Promoting the Successful Addition of a High School to an Existing Independent Elementary/Middle School: Short Range and Long Range Planning.
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This project was designed and implemented to help facilitate the addition of a high school program to an existing independent elementary/middle school by promotion of a ninth grade at the target school and its eventual transfer to a new independent high school. The objectives of the project were for 40% of parents from independent schools other than the target school responding to a survey to indicate a high level of interest in an independent high school in this location; for the Community High School Board to demonstrate satisfaction with the parent survey; for 20% of eighth grade students from two independent schools to indicate possible interest in attending the target ninth grade program; and for the education committee of the Community High School to create important documents and plans for the school. The parents responded to key questions on a survey designed to show levels of interest; the Board attended a presentation of survey data and filled out an evaluation rubric; the eighth graders attended an informational presentation and requested admissions packets; and the education committee wrote a mission statement and guiding principles and identified crucial elements of the Community High School. All the project objectives were met as well as additional accomplishments that helped organize and motivate the new high school. Appendixes include: a letter from the headmaster of the target school to the founder of the Community High School; the parent interest survey; data from the survey; the survey presentation evaluation rubric; the mission statement and guiding principles of the Community High School, and a student survey.

Authorship Statement

I hereby testify that this paper and the work it reports are entirely my own. When it has been necessary to draw from the work of others, published or unpublished, I have acknowledged such work in accordance with accepted scholarly and editorial practice. I give this testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of other professionals in the field and in the hope that my own work, presented here, will earn similar respect.

_____

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Practicum title: High School Feasibility Study

Promoting the Successful Addition of a HS to an Existing Ind. El/Mid Sch (Short Range or Long Range Planning)

Student's name: Janice Nagan-Sixt Completion date: 5/98

Project site: Academy of the Lakes Day School - Independent Schools

Mentor's name: Richard J. Wendick (print) Richard J. Wendick (signature)

Mentor's position at the site: Headmaster Phone #: 813-948-2133

Comment on impact of the project (handwritten)

Janice's work has had a very significant impact upon the development of an independent high school in North Tampa. She has participated in development activities and her findings and research have been valued

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CHAPTER I

Purpose

Background

The school that was the subject of this project is located in the southeastern part of the United States. It is a nondenominational, coeducational, independent day school of students between the ages of three and 14 years. The school was founded in 1992. It is important to understand the history of its growth, in order to grasp more fully the significance of this project.

The founder, as a public school administrator in the local public school district for 14 years, had been a part of a task force with the county and the local university. The task force researched methods to study schools, curriculum, instruction, and school structure. It also looked at existing schools, and studied philosophies of education.

The major outcome of this task force was a "restructured school." It had two primary houses with pilot programs, consultants, and professors from the local university. But, it turned out to be restructured in name only. There was much

resistance to the program from parents, and the community. There were internal problems large enough to be constantly dealing with state agencies including the police. After four years of unresolved problems, the founder was discouraged. The founder was now eager to pursue an earlier dream of creating a private school where more control could be exercised over the input and the outcomes of decisions. This dream had been sidetracked since 1975; but the time was right to make it a reality.

So, the founder created the school that is now referred to in this proposal. It was intended for pre-kindergarten through third grades, but as interested people came with older children as well, the school opened in the fall of 1992 with two levels. The first year in the primary house (kindergarten through second) there were 18 children. The other class was like an historic one-room schoolhouse for grades three through eight. There were initially 22 of these students. By the end of the year, that number had grown to 40.

The following school year (1993-1994), the school had grown to three programs. There were 34 students in the primary house, 36 in the intermediate house, and a separate middle school program with 20 students. They were in one class with three teachers splitting the school day. In the 1994-1995 school year, a

new building was added with four more classrooms. There were then two intermediate classes and two middle school classes. There were 64 primary students separated into classes, 36 intermediate students, and 40 middle school students.

In the spring of 1994, the State Council of Independent Schools sent a team for a preliminary visit. Following the visit, the school began a self-study, and received "new school" status. In two years, they had completed their self-study, and were ready for a full visitation. Five people came for an in-depth, two-day evaluation. In November, 1996 the school received full accreditation. (In 1997, the State Kindergarten Council, an arm of the State Council of Independent Schools, also accredited them.)

Meanwhile, in the middle school, though student enrollment was basically unchanged, expectations and dreams were expanding. In the summer of 1995, a huge breakthrough was realized when two parent/benefactors made it known they were bidding on nearby property for the school. They subsequently donated seven acres of lakefront property to the school. There was a mansion on the property, but it was in complete disrepair, and needed major renovation.

In the summer of 1996, that campus was "quick claimed" to the Board of Trustees. The founder, who is also headmaster, along with three other directors,

put up collateral, and a $600,000 loan was secured. In addition, $150,000 was raised from philanthropic donations, and fund raising efforts. They hired a contractor, architect, engineers, etc., and began construction. Ground breaking was in May, 1996, and almost exactly one year later, the school was dedicated in a meaningful ceremony. Work continued for three more months before the middle school was finished. That new school is a 1.2 million-dollar facility.

This campus is owned by the Educational Foundation, Incorporated. The foundation has a 501-(c) (3) IRS code (not for profit corporation). Donations to the Foundation are tax deductible like a church or synagogue, and they are exempt from ad valorem taxes.

Currently, the elementary school (pre-kindergarten through fifth) has 11 classrooms, a small library, an office, a lunchroom, and two workrooms. It is on three acres of property. The student population is 180.

The middle school is 15,000 square feet. It has locker rooms, music and art studios, a multi-purpose pavilion, seven classrooms, a science laboratory, offices for the parent association and foundation, conference rooms, an employee lounge, mechanical rooms, a clinic, and a complete administrative office. There is a computer network, and a central television system. The student population is 65.

The facility meets all school codes for accessibility by having an elevator, ramps, Braille labels, and handicapped toilets. There are also fire alarm systems, lift stations, and an air conditioning system includes fresh air to prevent "sick building" syndrome.

The building is aesthetically beautiful inside and out. The foyer hints at its roots as a mansion on the lake with high ceilings, wooden floors, and a grand winding wooden staircase. Even the small kitchen is special, with its floor of recycled paving bricks. The building overlooks a small lake; and a wooden pier descends from the back steps. The grounds are wooded with large trees. The oaks are particularly beautiful.

Personnel at the school are all degreed and state certified. Of the three pre-school teachers, two have Bachelor's degrees in early childhood education, and one has a Master's degree in the same. In the primary house there are four teachers. Two have Bachelor's degrees in early childhood education, one has a Master's degree in the same, and one has a Master's degree in reading. In the intermediate house there are also four teachers. Two have Bachelor's degrees in elementary education, and two have Master's degrees (elementary education and exceptional student education). In the middle school, one teacher is finishing a Master's degree in language arts, one has a Bachelor's degree in science, one has a

Bachelor's degree in economics and a law degree, one has a Bachelor's degree in secondary math, one has a Bachelor's degree in physical education, one has a Bachelor's degree in vocal music, one has a Master's degree in instrumental music, one has a Bachelor's degree in foreign language, and the art teacher, who teaches 60% time, has a Master's degree in art education. The assistant headmaster has an Educational Specialist degree in educational leadership; the founder/headmaster has a Master's degree in educational leadership; the director of development has a Master's degree in education; and the curriculum supervisor has a Bachelor's degree in elementary education and reading.

There is a business manager with a Bachelor's degree in math. A private accounting firm oversees the budget, and the school has private legal counsel, as well. The board of trustees (foundation) consists of officers (president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary) and currently 11 other trustees. Included in that membership are three attorneys, three certified public accountants, financial advisers, and other professionals. The foundation directs efforts to raise funds in order to bridge the gap between revenue generation and operating expenses. In addition, the foundation provides for teacher and program development. The founder/headmaster is the owner of the elementary campus. The board is the

owner of the middle school campus. The school is a tenant on the campus, with a 15-year renewable lease.

Programs at the school are varied. They are designed to provide "an intensive academic program with an emphasis on research and problem solving." Students are accepted to the school based on their ability to "blend and grow in a demanding school environment" (School Brochure p.2). The teacher/pupil ratio is 1:10 in the elementary school, and 1:11 in the middle school.

In the elementary program a multi- year, multi-age, "continuous progress" program is used. It is based on the models of Ralph Tyler and John Goodlad. In addition to the core subjects, there are five "specials" offered: drama, art, music, physical education, and Spanish.

The middle school is multi-aged, but much more traditional, and rather competitive. It uses modified block schedules (classes are either 60 or 80 minutes long). So, core classes occur four days a week. Every day the students have a different schedule. Essential subjects are offered at an advanced level. The core subjects are language arts, science, mathematics, social science, foreign language, and computers.

Each semester middle school students take two electives based on their preference and availability. There is a wide offering including: instrumental music,

chorus, drama, photography, 3-D studio art, speech/debate, advanced science, and computer classes. Students meet with their advisor weekly in a small group meeting. Special projects and concerns are discussed, as well as lessons from former Secretary of Education, William Bennett's, book The Book of Virtues (1994). Physical education (including personal fitness and health) is required for all middle school students. The school is a member of the regional league for interscholastic sports, and all traditional middle school team sports are offered. Supervised study halls are required and organized after school help is offered.

The school has a partnership with the local public library system. It is used for regular periods of instruction and media selection. It is located within walking distance of the school. In addition, the middle school has a large computer information center and will be on line in the near future.

A wide variety of enrichment clubs are offered to middle school students. A sample of clubs and activities that are available are: Art Club, French American Exchange, Chess Club, Debate, National Junior Honor Society, Yearbook, Sports Boosters, and Student Council. Extended care is offered at the elementary school.

The school clearly states its philosophy and mission in its main brochure. It states:

> The school exists to serve in the development of well-rounded individuals. It is the mission of the school's programs to assist

> youngsters in developing academic, social, emotional and physical skills which will enable them to lead successful, satisfying lives. The school's programs are designed to build a sense of social responsibility and cooperativeness in its students. It is recognized that each individual has value and that each individual develops in predictable ways within a varied framework of time. The development of the individual is based, in large part, upon the experiences of childhood. The school must serve its students based upon information and practices, which are proven to positively impact human development. Our overall goal is to provide each student with a nurturing, stimulating school environment. Students must receive relevant information and experiences which promote their growth as seekers and consumers of information so that they may become pro-active in their response to challenges. (p. 1)

The school community is comprised of approximately 200 families. Of that roughly 98% are Caucasian, and two percent are of other races. Roughly, 85% of the students are from two parent households. Children come from within the neighborhood or as far as 20 miles away. Roughly, 90% of the parents hold college degrees and are employed in the professions and private enterprise. Of the student population about 70% are considered "normal" on intelligence scales, about 25% gifted, and about five percent learning disabled. On the Stanford Achievement Test in April, 1997 the average total reading percentile scores were: 79 in grade three, 71 in grade four, 63 in grade five, 87 in grade six, 83 in grade seven, and 79 in grade eight. On the same test total math percentile scores were: 75 for grade three, 68 for grade four, 72 for grade five, 81 for grade six, 76 for grade seven, and 53 for grade eight.

Families provide their own transportation either personally, in carpools or by contracting with a private van service. Students bring their own lunches, or order in advance from the carry-in lunch program arranged by the school. There are also vending machines in the all-purpose pavilion.

Parents are very actively involved with the school. There is a packed school calendar with family events two to five times per month. These activities include: music and sports open houses, fall festival, new family barbecue, "Starry, Starry Night" (auction), young author's teas, parent mingles, friendship dinner, Festival of the Arts, concerts, ambassador programs, Science Fairs, etc. There is a vital Parents/Teachers/Students Association that organizes family centered social events and smaller fundraising projects. The foundation (board of trustees) is also a volunteer organization. In the 1996-97 school year a total of 20,000 volunteer hours were logged.

The author's role at this school is two-fold. First of all, the author has a middle school student who was in his first year at the school when the project took place. And, the author went through an extensive interview process at the school last year for the position of assistant headmaster. Though the author was not hired at that time, the founder/headmaster has often stated that the author will be offered the administrative position opening within the next two years. The author was

impressed with the mission and the accomplishments of the school to date, and was eager to participate in making the addition of a high school successful. Though not yet employed at the school, the headmaster gave the author a significant role in facilitating this undertaking. Realistically, it will take the continued talent and cooperation of many people to reach the goals inherent in the expansion of the target school and the creation of a whole new high school.

Problem Statement

It had taken five years for this school to build from a pre-kindergarten to a pre-kindergarten through grade eight program with separate facilities for elementary and middle school. It would have been nearly impossible to build such a successful school in less time. A great deal of emotional and financial expense had been expended in order to open, in 1996, the new middle school campus. The school and the board needed to be cautious about any new steps for expansion.

Yet, because of the aforementioned success of the school, there was consistent pressure by satisfied parents and students to continue receiving the education that had been in place. Currently, the school has completely accredited programs in kindergarten through eighth grade. In interviews with the headmaster/founder of the school, the author was told that over 50 percent of the 200 existing families had expressed interest in a high school. Parents of students

as young as fourth grade had made such inquiries. Also, the headmaster/founder reported that in the admissions process nine of 10 of the prospective parents asked questions about high school. The two most typical questions from both groups were: "Where do the students go to high school when they graduate from here?" And, "Will you ever have a high school here?" (Or, "Are there any plans to add a high school?"). The headmaster/founder added that when they lost a prospective student, it was because they chose the program on the other side of town that has a high school in addition to its elementary and middle schools; thus, eliminating the need to switch schools later.

Because of this, the target school had decided to begin a high school program. Plans were made to start with ninth grade in 1998-1999. Then, tenth grade will be added the following year, eleventh grade the next, and twelfth grade the year after that.

Coinciding with these plans, it happened that a committee had newly formed for a community high school project. The committee consists of independent school leaders, including the targeted school headmaster and president of the board, and other community members. It is this group's intention to found an independent high school in this location within the next few years.

The target headmaster proposed to that committee that the target school serve as the "pilot" site for the high school program. The headmaster invited input from the other schools for this program. The headmaster further proposed that the high school operate at the target school until the new high school opens. At that point, students and staff would transfer to the new high school. This transfer process would be fully explained in advance to prospective and current families. Upon the opening of the new high school, the target school will discontinue high school offerings and market the new school as an extension of their program located on another campus (see Appendix A, p. 101).

When this idea was discussed with the committee, it was readily agreed to. The committee agreed that such a plan would allow the high school program to begin next year without causing conflict later on. All four schools represented in the committee saw the benefits to the proposal.

So, no independent high school existed in this locale, but one is now starting at the target school beginning with a ninth grade for the 1998-1999 school year. The author knew this because of numerous interviews with the headmaster and handouts that were distributed to parents. Also, a committee was formed to create a complete independent high school in this locale. While the board of directors at the target school is involved in this committee, that is not yet the case

at all the schools. The author knew about the proceedings of the committee because of discussions with the target headmaster and the author's own participation at meetings of the committee and eventual election to executive office on it. None of the four schools has ever had a high school program.

What needed to happen was extensive and systematic work towards the completion of the goal of a successful independent high school in this location. In the short term much needed to occur before a ninth grade could be added to the target school; in the long term even more far-reaching goals needed to be achieved for a separate high school program to exist.

Surveys were distributed to all 200 families at the target school (see Appendix B, p.104). Of those, 88 were returned. Important information was discovered including the finding that of the respondent parents, 60 percent said they were "very strongly interested" in continued private education through high school for their students. Almost 50 percent said they would "somewhat strongly" consider sending their student to a high school in its first year of existence. Forty-one percent said they would "very strongly" consider sending their student to a high school in its second or third year of existence. Also, 40 percent of the parents said that location was "very important" to their decision on a choice of high school

for their student. And, 54 percent said location was "somewhat important (see Appendix C, p. 108).

The history of the school and these survey results documented the interest in beginning the high school program. The quality of that program needed to be consistent with the excellence of the rest of the school. Yet, aside from rough planning, no program was yet established. Therefore, the ninth grade program needed to be specifically planned and promoted with provisions made for the addition of the other high school grades in subsequent years. The collaboration with the Community High School project for the eventual transferal of the high school needed to happen, as well.

The author used three target groups in this practicum internship project. The first was parents. First, the author documented the extent of the interest and the specific desires of parents in the larger community regarding an independent high school in this locale by using a parent survey at the other three schools that would be the primary feeder schools.

From talking with parents, the author was also aware that they had many questions about the beginning of the high school, the eventual transfer to the community school, and about the high school program itself. Parents needed to

understand the processes and the program. The author was given the authority to help facilitate this understanding.

The second target group was the newly formed community high school committee which became known as the Board of Trustees of the Community High School. It is comprised of the principals of four independent elementary/ middle schools in this location, including the headmaster of the target school. It also has board members from the schools and other community leaders. The author's first goal was to become a trustee and then in this role to present the findings of the parent surveys in a formal presentation to the whole committee giving weight and direction to all future proceedings and data to help motivate school board involvement.

The third target group was going to be the teachers at the targeted school. The author was going to provide curriculum workshops that would aid in the needed education of the teachers. However, at the direction of the headmaster of the school (the author's mentor) at the mid-project assessment, the third group was changed to the Education Committee of the Community High School Board of Trustees.

This practicum internship project had a direct relationship to the author's educational leadership major. The author's goal is to be an independent school

principal in this locale, specifically at the target school. In that position the author will be working closely with parents, teachers, and the other independent school principals in the vicinity. The lessons the author learned while completing this project will be invaluable in this future expanded career in education.

Outcome Objectives

The author has been involved in providing education in quality alternative (to traditional high school) settings for the majority of a long career. This is because the author is convinced that some students (and some educators) thrive in alternative settings. While the author fully recognizes the necessity and value of public high schools, the author also clearly sees the need for quality independent high schools. The fact that there are choices in society encourages all school systems to strive for excellence.

The author believes that independent schools, because of their autonomy, have the ability to be very innovative. Also, because typically they are smaller schools, they can avoid some of the problems that occur in public school due to large numbers of students and staff. Students often feel more of a connection to the private school. Many have attended since elementary school, and know most of the students and staff. This is beneficial to their motivation and self-esteem. What may be given up in regards to a more extensive list of course offerings is

gained back in the realm of human connection; the feeling of importance, safety, individual attention and recognition. These qualities are essential for growth. While it is true that some students will find these things for themselves in any setting, many more will coast, or even flounder in the large, often impersonal, traditional public high school.

Also, teachers at independent schools may have more freedom to experiment with content and more opportunity for close interaction with students, thereby increasing their own motivation and job satisfaction. And, when parents are sacrificing financially, as most are when they pay for their children's education, they may have extra incentive to be involved in a way proven to have positive outcomes. Students, parents, and teachers, as well as the community at large will benefit from having a more conveniently located independent high school as a viable choice.

The proposed objectives of this project were: During a 12-week implementation period, at least 200 parents from independent elementary/middle schools other than the target school will provide feedback about their needs for high school education for their children as measured by their return of a completed interest survey (see Appendix B, p. 104). And, at least 40 percent of these parents will indicate a high level of interest in an independent high school in this location as

measured by their positive answers to at least two key questions on this interest survey.

Also, during the 12-week implementation period, the Community High School Committee will attend a presentation of parent survey results as measured by the attendance record in the minutes of the meeting. After the presentation, the committee members will demonstrate satisfaction with the survey and the presentation as measured by their comments in a post presentation discussion and by their 12 answers on an evaluation rubric (see Appendix D, p. 111). Their satisfaction will be indicated by a composite score of at least 2.6 out of a possible 4.0 on the rating scale.

Additionally, during the 12-week implementation period, the majority of eighth grade students from at least two independent schools will attend an informational presentation about the new ninth grade program at the target school as measured by review of an attendance log. At least 20 percent of these students will indicate their possible interest in attending that ninth grade program based on their request for additional written information to take home to their parents.

The last objective for the project was for the original third target group (teachers). When that target group was changed, the new objective became: And, during the 12-week implementation, the Education Committee (made up of

administrators and teachers) of the Community High School Board of Trustees will participate in a series of meetings at which they will create a mission statement and a set of companion guiding principles as measured by approval of these documents by the Board of Trustees. The Education Committee, using a management action plan, will also identify the crucial elements of the Community High School as measured by the committee report of this work to the Board of Trustees shown by meeting minutes.

CHAPTER II

Research and Solution Strategy

The literature in support of the author's project is far-reaching and varied. Subjects that include: magnet and charter schools and other choice issues; voucher programs; comparative studies of results from private and public schools; parent relationships; teacher training; class size; scheduling; curriculum; and other administrative concerns all are important and relevant. Reading in each of these areas helped in the author's understanding of the specific issues and broader concepts one must consider in the creation of an innovative school.

John Goodlad (1997) stated that to think that schools can heal our societal evils is dangerous and draining. Rather, he said, schools are a mirror of our society. As we create a healthier society our schools will reflect this growth. He strongly criticized politicians who have used the schools as bartering tools for selfish ends. He wasn't complimentary of the media either, believing them to blame schools for most societal ills. Goodlad said, "we know enough to have good schools everywhere." (1997:56) He asserted that most of this information is not being used because of complex circumstances. But, he said that the state must

determine standards for home schooling that will satisfy individual needs as well as attend to the well being of the rest of us. He said, "This, presumably, is the basic requirement of education in a social and political democracy" (Goodlad, 1997: 40).

Because of the belief in the important benefits of providing choice in education, Hawaii has developed a variation of the magnet school concept called the Learning Center Program. The centers are housed in high schools but offer classes to elementary and middle school students, as well. Yap (1991) administered a formative evaluation of these centers. The purpose was to clarify perceptions toward the Learning Center Program, better understand its educational programs, and to generate ideas for improvement of the centers.

An evaluation team conducted onsite interviews with coordinators, administrators, program and school staff, and some parents, community members and students. These site visits also included a variety of observations. In addition, parents and students at the centers filled out survey questionnaires. The student surveys were designed using a five-point Likert scale. The parent survey was mostly Likert but included some open-ended items. Also, data on grade point averages and student absenteeism for each site were obtained from the statewide

student information system. Data between centers were compared, as well as information about traditional settings.

Yap found that a majority of the program staff, school staff, and school administrators believed that the Learning Center Program had played a major role in increasing discipline, self-esteem, responsibility, and positive attitudes toward school and learning. Onsite observations showed that, for the most part, the instructional activities at the centers furthered their goals and directives, and that participants were satisfied with these themes. Student enrollment was stable, attendance superior, and program dropout rates low. The data showed, without a doubt, that program students as a whole earned better grades in their Learning Center classes than their counterparts in the rest of the high school population over a three-year period.

Completed questionnaires were turned in by 2,571 students, which was an 85.3 percent response rate. The survey results were very favorable, with most students giving high marks in all cases. The majority indicated that they learned more, and with more interest and variety than they would have in the traditional programs. They praised the teaching methods and organization in the school. A total of 1,279 parents returned their completed surveys (45.6 percent). A majority

of the parents responded favorably to the survey items. The parents cited a variety of positive activities that their child had been involved in that fostered self-esteem, an increased confidence level, communication skills, as well as thinking and problem solving skills. They also had many suggestions for improvements including upgrading facilities and equipment, increasing parental involvement in activities, and finding ways to better inform parents about the centers in their own or others' districts. This was the biggest area of their concern. Parents did not feel well informed. They also wanted more opportunities to be involved with program activities.

Yap concluded that the Learning Center Program was being implemented as intended. The program staff was competent, the teachers were dedicated and enthusiastic and the program had begun to show a positive pattern of student achievement outcomes. There was strong evidence that the centers were held in esteem by participants and their parents. However, there was also indication that a significant percentage of the parents were not well informed about the Learning Center their children attended. Only a small percentage of them were well informed about other centers in the district. Yap pointed out that parents and

students can only take advantage of choices in education when they are aware of the availability of these choices.

First (1990) pointed out that choice has been seen as everything from a panacea to a demon in regards to public education. Whichever view is taken, she said choice is on every educator and politician's mind these days.

First went on to describe six basic types of choice plans for public schools: interdistrict choice and postsecondary options; second-chance plans; controlled-choice plans; intradistrict choice; and magnet schools. Some of these allow the consumers to be given the central role of choosing their education. Others give the providers the flexibility of responding to the consumers in a flexible way. But, said First, in all of the options choice surfaces as an instrumental and fundamental value.

The author became interested in the topic of charter schools after encountering it in the literature many times. The author ended up reading several articles on this subject thus gaining a much better understanding about a movement that has gained considerable momentum in our country and has a definite relationship to private schools.

Geske, Davis and Hingle (1997) began by asking why the charter school movement has become so popular in our country? They continued with another question: "...can charter schools remain public, financed with public funds but at the same time, enhance school choice options that foster a more market-driven educational system?" (Geske, Davis & Hingle, 1997: 15). They defined a charter school as a distinct educational program that operates under a contract between the organizers and a sponsor. Once the charter has been detailed by the organizers and approved by the sponsor, the charter school becomes independent legally and fiscally, and operates independently of the local school district. Therefore, the school controls its own finances. For instance it can enter into contracts that are legally binding, hire staff and use resources as it sees fit.

Advantages were outlined as follows: Charter schools increase options for teachers giving them a chance to participate more autonomously and innovatively, and with more direct involvement in school operations. They also give parents and students the choice of a variety of environments. Charter schools also permit decentralization, especially if they bypass local districts and receive funding directly from the state. And, they said that the school can achieve results in the manner they see fit, knowing that if they don't their charters could be revoked.

And, the element of competition is added since the schools have to attract voluntary students.

The authors outlined various existing school choice options, categorizing them as either public or market choice systems. They said that because of their autonomy, charter schools would probably fall into the market choice system, similar to vouchers and tax credit programs.

Charter school legislation was then addressed. Apparently by early 1996 approximately 250 charter schools had been approved in 20 states (this number has increased), and at least 200 of the schools were actually in existence. Legal issues often center on the degree of autonomy the schools will be allowed. They are often classified as falling under "stronger or weaker" laws. Advocates say that "stronger" laws gives a charter a sponsor other than the local school board. The rub is that if the state laws grant considerable autonomy, they may run the risk of being declared unconstitutional. This has actually occurred.

The authors then gave descriptions of several successful charter schools. They were quite varied in their makeup, and clientele. "The individual charter schools created in the...states that permit them are highly diverse and clearly offer

students and parents an extensive array of educational programs form which they can choose" (Geske, Davis & Hingle, l997: 19).

They stated that there is little empirical evidence available about the performance of charter schools because they are such a recent phenomenon. Anecdotal reports are available. Initial reports indicated that charter schools have less autonomy than expected or wished for. However, they still created new types of programs. One thing that clearly distinguished the schools was a strong commitment by parents and staff.

The authors stated that a difficulty is that the schools are often subject to state funding formulas designed for districts not schools, and they often must use required state accounting systems. Small charter schools don't always fit in these pegs. The myth believed by critics is that these schools are turned loose with public funds to do whatever they like with no accountability, their impression was that charter schools in most states continue to be burdened by too many rules and procedures.

However, teachers in charter schools reported having more say about curriculum and discipline. And though they reported heavier workloads, they had more freedom to experiment with content. Preliminary evidence showed that

charter schools enrolled substantial numbers of minority children. They also provided an appropriate setting for students who for one reason or another have not fit into traditional settings.

The authors then detailed some concerns about charter schools. They were somewhat worried about the efficacy of the laws that protect and ensure that the schools "continue to maintain their status as public institutions that provide the desired societal benefits" (Geske, Davis & Hingle, 1997:22). They wondered if the personnel would have expertise in all the areas needed to operate a school, and asserted that personnel will require some type of agency to provide support. They also said that it might be a mistaken belief that autonomy will allow the schools to be more efficient. They wondered if they will "guarantee a high cost, expensive education" (1997: 22).

The authors were also concerned that even though, theoretically, ineffective charter schools will be closed, in reality they will have a strong incentive to maintain their existence. In addition to utilizing political pressure...charter schools will also be encouraged to engage in other activities that may not be compatible with educational goals." (Geske, Davis & Hingle, 1997: 23) The final concern stated was that some harm might come to current reform efforts of the

public education system. They thought that charter schools may be an easy out for political leaders who are often unwilling to commit more resources to education, or unwilling to oppose the powerful groups with a stake in education.

They concluded by stating that the advocates of charter schools will have to convince the public that the schools are in their best interests and that they foster democratic principals while remaining independent. The authors wondered if the appropriate balance could be achieved.

Molnar (1996) described three types of charter school advocates: zealots; entrepreneurs; and reformers. He said that it is the latter group that generates the most favorable press reports. But, he said that, "despite the rosy image provided by the child-centered reformers, most of the money and political influence driving the charter movement have been provided by the zealots and the profiteers" (Molnar, 1996: 2). He said that for these groups, charter schools are as much a vehicle for breaking up teachers' unions and lowering wages as an education reform strategy.

Molnar stated that charter school reformers complain loudly about overregulation and unresponsive bureaucracies. He said they believed that if these

evils were removed then a nirvana of creativity, spirit, and cooperation would blossom. He said that sounded "appealingly libertarian" (Molnar, 1996: 3).

Molnar gave some historical background of the charter movement. He believed that the popularity of charter schools demonstrated America's enduring faith that major educational reforms could be accomplished cheaply. He detailed financing problems stating that a recent survey of charter schools listed lack of financial support and start-up funds as the most frequently mentioned problems. He said that even though problems have been shown, charter supporters will not admit that they are backing a reform that does not have a demonstrated relationship to increased academic achievement, and that will be costly to maintain.

He countered the assertion that these schools provide choices for parents, by saying that in the real world a multitude of financial considerations limits parental choices. He also maintained that once having raised the necessary money to open the school, keeping track of it is next to impossible. He said, "few of the institutions legally empowered to grant charters are likely to have the expertise or the resources to monitor and enforce those charters" (Molnar, 1996: 6).

Molnar described a charter school that failed, but gave no mention of the many examples of successful schools. He did say that many people who start

charter schools would work diligently to accomplish their goals, and that some will achieve them. However, he believed many will not last. "People burn out, they move on, their kids grow up, and for any number of reasons the effort collapses" (Molnar, 1996: 8). He predicted that the "quick-buck" operators are the ones who will be most successful (Molnar, 1996: 8).

Molnar concluded that charter schools are "built on the illusion that our society can be held together solely by the self-interested pursuit of our individual purposes". He also wondered whether "the democratic ideal of the common good can survive the onslaught of a market mentality that threatens to turn every human relationship into a commercial interaction" (Molnar, 1996: 9).

Nathan (1996) stated his point of view about charter schools in his opening sentences: "The charter movement can improve the opportunities of individual students, as well as strengthen public education as a whole. Four schools illustrate the unlimited potential" (1996: 1). He went on to assert that the goal of the charter movement is not only to establish innovative schools, but also to help improve the public education system.

Nathan provided four significant illustrations of the potential of charter schools. While four examples certainly does not a study make, they certainly gave

credibility to the positive possibilities while more extensive data are being collected.

The first example was San Diego's O'Farrell Community School serving inner-city middle school students. More than two-thirds of those are eligible for free or subsidized lunches. Eight percent are Caucasian, the rest a mixture of minority groups. There is a Chief Education Officer who is leader and "Keeper of the Dream." A governing council meets weekly and is comprised of teachers, students, parents, and community representatives. The National Education Association asked one of O'Farrell's teachers to help other public school teachers establish charters.

The second school cited was the Minnesota New Country School established by three technologically adept public school teachers who grew frustrated with colleagues who were unwilling to use technology. The school received start up grants from six different sources. Students participate in frequent field trips and internships. On one of them students noticed frogs with mutations, and their subsequent testimony to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency lead to research that has gained national attention. Technology was a major focus at the

school. Instead of hiring a principal, they bought additional computers, and pay teachers a higher salary than the local district does.

City Academy was the third example given by Nathan. It was the nation's first charter to have its contract renewed. It is also in Minnesota. The students are racially diverse high school dropouts aged 15 to 21. Their hands-on projects include gutting and rehabilitating several buildings, and applying math principles to this work. Students also helped neighbors by doing such tasks as shoveling the walk of elderly residents. The small size of the school allowed for much communication that helped to avoid violence. Beyond the basics, students developed a concrete post-high school plan.

The last example given was the Academy Charter School in Colorado. It had 315 students in Kindergarten through grade eight that included both gifted and disabled. The school combined innovative teaching with conservative curriculum ideas. A variety of methods were used to encourage understanding and demonstrate achievement including plays, and model building with Lego blocks. The local school district had been very supportive of the efforts. That had been rewarded with an improvement of student scores on standardized tests.

Nathan also spoke of strong versus weak laws regarding charter schools. But, he illustrated that the states with the strongest laws had vast numbers of the schools in contrast to ones with weak laws with few.

In conclusion, Nathan admitted that because these schools are in their relative infancy, it is too early to draw definitive conclusions. But, he cited examples of gains in student achievement and behavior in several additional locations. He further added: "Educators throughout the nation are accepting the challenge and opportunity that the charter movement represents. The charter concept--combining freedom, accountability, and competition--can be an important part of redesigning and strengthening public education" (Nathan, 1996: 6).

Steinbrueck (1997) pointed out that public schools are not the only option, and that vouchers would actually allow public schools more money by eliminating the overcrowding. He stated that many private schools spend less than the public schools on their students. So, while the public schools will lose students, allowing vouchers would give them more dollars to spend on existing students. And while fewer teachers would be needed in public schools, the ones remaining could be paid more, he said.

He went on to assert the belief that vouchers are not being approved because teachers fear for their jobs and their pensions, and that at risk students find it difficult to go anywhere but to a public school. He proposed plans such as 401(k) that allow transfer of pensions, and offered the argument that more per-pupil money would help the high need student. He also stated that politicians would need to be willing to relinquish some of their power for vouchers to be accepted.

Two states have been using voucher programs, Wisconsin and Ohio. Milwaukee's program is seven years old and according to McLarin (1995) most parents are satisfied with the plan even though academic performance has stayed about the same. McLarin stated that the theory behind vouchers is that competition from private schools will motivate public schools to improve while giving parents the ability to choose more freely. But, as of 1995 that had not really happened yet as the program was small in scale.

Reinhard (1997) reported that Ohio's lawmakers voted to support the Cleveland voucher program for the next two years even though the courts recently ruled that using public money for religious schools is unconstitutional. George Voinovich, Cleveland's mayor has supported the voucher program and wanted to

expand it. But, appeals are expected, so it will be slow going. Other districts and educators are watching this program and the one in Milwaukee that does not include religious schools to see how achievement is effected. But, critics are many, Reinhard said, as they believe that vouchers take away much needed resources from the city's public schools.

In the meantime, Sack (1997) reported that the House of Representatives in Washington rejected a bill recently that would allow states and districts to give needy students federal vouchers to help them attend parochial and other private schools. The Help Scholarship proposal was debated on the floor particularly as it related to civil rights protections, Sack stated. But several representatives asserted that they would not let the matter drop even though Sack reported that President Clinton would almost certainly veto it should it get to his desk.

Gibbons and Bickel (1991) stated that private school proponents claim that on the average those schools more effectively promote measured academic achievement than do public schools. They stated that these proponents of private schools maintain that students complete these schools more often than their public school counterparts, therefore having a higher probability of attending college. To the contrary, Gibbons and Bickel asserted that proponents of public school hold

that little or no such differences exist. Gibbons and Bickel asked in their study whether there was a difference between public and private high schools in promoting student performance as measured by the high-profile SAT verbal and math tests. And, they "implicitly" (Gibbons and Bickel, 1991: 102) asked if either public or private high schools have an SAT score advantage which promoted college enrollment.

Gibbons and Bickel applied multiple-regression analysis to two SAT data sets for Florida and a national SAT data set. The national data set included a 10 percent simple random sample of all students in the United States who took the verbal and math sections of the Scholastic Aptitude Test in 1983-1984. The Florida 1983-1984 data set included all students in Florida who took the same tests in those years. The Florida 1982-1983 data set includes all students in Florida who took the same tests in 1982-1983. The authors asserted that the close association between SAT scores and school grades makes the SAT a useful tool in measuring educational achievement.

The test results were analyzed using the SAT verbal score as the outcome measure. Two regression equations using the SAT verbal score as the outcome measure were reported for each data set. The data sets used did not permit the

identification of different types of private schools. Therefore, a wide variety of private schools were lumped into one category. A separate table was compiled to show the results of using mathematical aptitude as the outcome measure with a complement of independent variables.

Gibbons and Bickel stated that they found that public and private high schools seem to be equally effective in promoting performance on the SAT verbal test. They found that public schools appeared to provide an advantage in terms of SAT math scores. While the authors acknowledged that the SAT might well be construed as a measure of aptitude rather than of achievement, they stated that the nature of their results suggested that the SAT is a satisfactory dependent variable for comparisons of public and private schools.

Gibbons and Bickel concluded that public and private high schools seem to be about equally effective in promoting SAT performance. They later concluded that only the comparison of the national data set for 1983-1984 showed private high schools to be superior to public high schools in promoting measured achievement and college enrollment in relation to verbal scores. They stated that public high schools did show a consistent advantage where math scores were concerned; thus, they were better able to prepare students for college.

Witte (1992) also compared private and public school achievement when he asked if the results were different and certain enough to be relevant to those considering choice issues. Witte examined the High School and Beyond study. He stated that it is the only database that provides a systematic, national random sample of both public and private schools with achievement measures at two points. He actually concluded that though much useful data were generated from this study, little of substance could really be shown to be relevant to significant policy standards for choice.

He did, however, find that there were many differences in characteristics between public and private schools. Private schools were much smaller and enrolled more Caucasians who came from families with more educated parents and a higher median income. The school environments were also very different. More advanced level courses were offered at private schools and more of the students took them. Witte stated that,

> In private, compared with public schools, students and administrators reported considerably higher expectations and homework, more strict and fair discipline, less fighting and verbal abuse of teachers, more school spirit, more involvement in school activities, less truancy, and less drug and alcohol abuse (Witte, 1997: 372).

The author did reading about class size, student/teacher ratio, and various types of student and teacher schedules. The author also did research about preparing teachers for the challenges of the classroom of today and tomorrow.

Pate-Bain, Achilles, Boyd-Zaharias, and McKenna (1992) described a four year study of class size called Project STAR (Student/Teacher Achievement Ratio) which analyzed student development and achievement in small classes (13 to17 students per teacher), medium classes (18 to 21 students per teacher), and regular classes (22 to 25 students with a full-time teacher and aide.) This Tennessee study followed the students from kindergarten through third grade. The study included 17 inner city, 16 suburban, eight urban, and 39 rural schools. The students and teachers were all randomly assigned to class sizes.

Student achievement was measured using the Stanford Achievement Test, STAR's Basic Skills First Criterion Tests, and Tennessee's Basic Skills Criterion Tests. The study showed conclusively that those students in the small classes scored higher on the tests in all four years and in all locales. More than 1000 teachers were interviewed during the study and the teachers in the small classrooms repeatedly cited many benefits. Most commonly they reported the ability to provide significant individualized instruction and monitoring with more

interaction and enrichment. They said they had more knowledge of each student's learning style and needs.

Pate-Bain, Achilles, Boyd-Zaharias, and McKenna went on to describe the follow up study that was done in Tennessee to see if the positive effects of the STAR program were retained by the students as they moved up in grades. This new study was called the Lasting Benefits Study (LBS). It revealed that on every achievement measure the students who had been in small STAR classes, no matter where the school was located, students faired better. At least one year after involvement in small classes, positive effects were demonstrated. Examples were then given of excellent teaching practices that maximized the benefits of the small classes. It was found that the benefits of small student/teacher ratio were greater when teachers use more innovative methods.

Nidds and McGerald (1996) wrote a questionnaire to be completed by principals to help express the realities of educators today, and help prepare those of tomorrow to face the challenges of a new century. They received responses from about 40 percent of the Long Island, New York secondary school administrators, specifically 19 high school principals and 14 middle level principals.

There were five items on the questionnaire:

> What are the academic needs of secondary school students that should be stressed in our education courses?; What are the non-academic needs of secondary school students that we should stress in our education courses?; What educational approaches should we stress in our secondary school education courses?; What classroom management and discipline skills should be stressed in our secondary education courses?; What are the current educational challenges that new teachers will meet on the secondary level? (Nidds and McGerald, 1996, pp. 40-43).

Nidds and McGerald found out that principals wanted teacher training to be improved in three areas: academic preparation, pedagogical preparation, and personal development. In addition to existing high standards for teachers, they wanted new teachers to have more personal expertise in the use of computers, and also be able to teach those skills to students. They were also desirous of seeing more interdisciplinary units of study with multi-cultural perspectives and authentic tasks included. They wanted new teachers to be comfortable with innovative approaches such as cooperative learning environments and non-graded classrooms.

It was clear to Nidds and McGerald that principals' expectations of prospective teachers are broader than in years past. The authors contended that this reflected the high levels at which the principals themselves were now working, and gave them high marks for their dedication and abilities. However the authors

wanted to include three other areas that they felt were missing from the responses. First, was inclusion of parents and the community as resources. Second, was curriculum that required higher level thinking and problem-solving skills. And third, was commitment to apprenticeship experiences for more students. The authors stated that while it might be difficult to incorporate these elements, they are crucial to facing the challenges of schools in the twenty-first century.

Louis, Kruse, and Raywid (1996) pointed out that the current reform movement is more likely to focus on structural or curricular changes than on altering the daily work of teachers. They stressed the importance of strengthening professional communities. They outlined five important ways for this to be done: shared norms and values; reflective dialogue; de-privatization of practice; collective focus on student learning; and collaboration. They said that it is essential that teachers learn from each other and from experts in addition to creating their own knowledge.

To illustrate these points, Louis, Kruse and Raywid contrasted two experimental schools that both had the goal of providing experiential learning. The names of the schools were changed to provide anonymity. Metro Academy had become a thriving example of the possibilities for reform while Dewey Middle

School was floundering. One of the major differences in the schools was the focus on shared teacher reflection and practices at Metro in contrast to the rarity of inter-teacher observation and dialogue about instruction at Dewey. At Metro teachers expected to observe each other's classes and were keenly aware of each other's areas of expertise. They worked together to design collaborative action-oriented curriculum. In contrast, teachers at Dewey did not have the time to work together, staff meetings were not viewed as opportunities for exchange, and there was little effort to develop a school-wide framework for the curriculum. These examples showed that in addition to interpreting innovative educational school visions on their own, that they need opportunities to create a professional community by working together to develop the school.

Louis, Kruse, and Raywid outlined several implications for administrators from these findings. They said that when the school leaders view themselves as intellectual leaders the whole community benefits from increased access to learning opportunities. They also discussed how being very accessible is critical. And, being able to help others work through problems by the creation of an environment where those problems are seen as opportunities for discussion is key. Facilitating debate and dialogue were shown to be crucial leadership goals. They said that if

principals focus their efforts on increasing this kind of school community then reform could be much more effective.

Huling, Resta, Mandeville, and Miller (1996) outlined nine factors to consider when selecting secondary school teachers. They suggested that administrators be knowledgeable about secondary teacher preparation programs, and that they look for applicants who were prepared more heavily in field experiences out in the schools. Another suggestion was not to overlook teachers from other levels, but to appreciate the benefits of age and maturity when hiring teachers for secondary schools. The wisdom of assigning a trained mentor to a novice teacher and not over-loading them with a heavy schedule was stated.

The advice was also given to take a candidate's predisposition about working with adolescents into account. One would be wise to hire the individual who looks at the students as interesting people to grow with, as opposed to the adversary. It was also stated that administrators should look for teachers who desire on-the-job training and who view their own learning as continual. Finally, it was stated that it is beneficial to enhance the diversity of the staff. These suggestions should be added to standard criteria for hiring teachers in order to use every possible strategy for employing the best staff.

Brooks and Brooks (1993) said that constructivism, the theory that defines learning as a self-regulated process of resolving inner cognitive conflicts, is the basis for many of the current reforms in education. They stated that a constructivist teacher believes that learning must be connected to meaningfulness, that learners are responsible for their own learning, that there must be dialogue between students, and that learning is interdisciplinary.

Brooks and Brooks described the specific role of the constructivist teacher as encouraging student autonomy and initiative, student dialogue, and student inquiry; using raw data and primary sources, along with manipulative, interactive and physical materials; framing tasks with terms such as classify, analyze, predict and create; and allowing student responses to drive lessons, and alter content. They added that constructivist teachers inquire about students' understandings of concepts before sharing their own understanding, encourage students in experiences that might lead to contradictions of their initial hypotheses and then help them process, and that they seek elaboration of students' initial responses.

Rather than focusing on finite details and rigid concepts of right and wrong, it was stated that to become a constructivist teacher, one must implement

practices that encourage students to think and rethink, demonstrate and exhibit in a variety of ways.

Licklider (1997) asserted that traditional inservice sessions for teachers are limited at best. She said that we must " provide the need, time, opportunity, and support for educators to confront their deeply held beliefs and assumptions about what high schools have always been and what teachers have always done" (Licklider, 1997:21). She also said that effective staff development programs have clear and specific goals and objectives established with the active involvement of the participants. This ensures it will evolve to meet the needs of participants.

She stated that single session staff development activities are not as effective as ones that happen over time allowing participants to reflect, discuss and receive feedback about the application of new information. Licklider said that educators must be able to practice, experiment, and analyze learning in non-threatening environments. She pointed out that administrative support is crucial to successful staff development. When principals support change and participate in the learning with the teachers there is far more improvement. Providing incentives for and reinforcing change is also very beneficial.

She identified the role of the adept educational developer as shifting from expert to facilitator, helping participants to become self-directed learners. She advised using group work and other interactive techniques rather than lecture, encouraging faculty members to consult each other and rely on faculty experience. She said it is helpful to state the role of the instructional developer and the expectations of the staff very directly.

O'Neil (1995) illustrated the creative ways that many schools are now structuring the school day. He described Wasson High School in Colorado Springs that implemented a block schedule called four by four where students take four 90-minute classes each day. Classes met daily, so they were over in half the weeks. Teachers taught no more than three classes, so they ended up with many less students to get to know. Average class size was slightly lower this way.

O'Neil gave examples of teachers who were very happy with this system saying that they could get to know students better and could more easily vary teaching methods with more time to do it in. O'Neil cited the work of Joseph Carroll who designed an alternative schedule known as the Copernican Plan. Carroll had been disenchanted with the fact that in a traditional schedule teachers have little time to give to all their students. Therefore, a student might go several

days without a meaningful interaction with a teacher. The longer classes free teachers whose innovative methods did not fit the traditional schedule.

Initially, O'Neil reported, teachers might have some concerns. They worry about what they will do with all that time. But when they moved into cooperative learning, group-work, and more classroom processing, the time is very productively used. At Champlin Park High School in Minnesota, students in the broadcasting class could work on authentic tasks in preparation of a daily television news program that was broadcast school-wide. The teacher said that course would be almost impossible to teach in a regular schedule.

O'Neil stated that schools moving to block schedules are reporting the ability to better accommodate the individual learning styles of their students. But, he said that the experts agree that the schedule can only facilitate learning. He stated that it is the teachers being able to use different class formats effectively that makes the biggest difference.

Manzo (1997) stated that of the nearly 23,000 public and private high schools nationwide, experts estimated that 40 percent are using non-traditional schedules to help with crowding, increased graduation requirements, student desire for greater course variety, and the attempts to use class time more effectively. She

reported that The National Education Commission on Time and Learning, set up by Congress in 1991, called for educators to use time in newer, better ways.

Manzo described a program that is going beyond block scheduling. At Bowie High School, in Austin, Texas a 12-hour day has been instituted that allows teachers and students time for jobs, studying, or college courses. Teachers can teach classes in the morning and then come back at night. Students can start school at a variety of times.

Manzo told of the process that happened before this plan could be instituted. Principal Ewing involved as many school staff and community members as possible in the planning and developmental stages. The plan that was arrived at includes an interdisciplinary curriculum and team teaching across subjects, and more student choices and responsibilities in addition to the major schedule change.

When it was introduced, there was much approval, but even more opposition and fear. Principal Ewing worked long and hard for district approval. Instead of trying to gain acceptance from all teachers, they were given their choice of schedules. Some are still teaching in a traditional format. But, program growth is critical. Manzo said that school officials are hopeful that voluntary schedule

variations will become popular enough that no need for forced changes will occur as has happened at other area schools.

English (1997) asserted that the issue of block versus traditional scheduling need not be an either-or proposition. He described the program at his 60-student middle school in Providence, Rhode Island that uses traditional, 45-minute periods. But, at least once a week or more if the need arises, the four teachers trade time to allow for special units and projects. The teachers, he stated, find these acquired blocks of time, without the requirement of having them all the time, very useful. He said that teachers and students were polled about changing to an all block schedule, but that they are not eager to do so. The flexibility of the current arrangement is preferred.

Murdock et al. (1995) described the innovative program at William Diamond Middle School in Lexington, Massachusetts. It is called Horace's Friday, and was initiated in 1992 when it was observed how engaged students were during work on complex open-ended projects. After research, and grant funding from the Lexington Education Foundation, they were able to launch the program in 1993.

On Fridays, students spent most of the day with one teacher/adviser pursuing intensive independent learning projects in one of four core subjects. At the end of the quarter, students presented their work to each other. Then, they moved on to another of the subjects, experiencing these projects in all four core-subjects over the year. Past projects were varied. In English, students read books with intergenerational themes, and interviewed senior citizens on tape. They also worked with and for the senior citizens. In math, students planned and designed their dream houses with blue prints and models. In science, students worked on ecology projects. In social studies, each student thoroughly researched a current issue, and then completed an action that would make a real difference in the world.

The emphasis was on student responsibility. Teachers helped students plan their own projects, set their own deadlines, and answer their own questions. The projects allowed for much variation in learner level and style. They provided enough challenge for high achievers, while being manageable for all.

Important results have been realized using this format. There was an increase in student engagement, more confidence in accessing information, and an increase in communication, thinking skills and efficient time management. Strong

teacher/student relationships were formed. Most teachers and students at the school were enthusiastic about Horaces's Fridays.

The author explored some of the issues that parents face in helping their children have the most beneficial education possible. Articles about tuition and loans, and communication with school personnel added to the author's understanding.

Goldin and Davidson (1995) reported that with tuition at the nation's leading private high schools double what it was in 1985, an increasing number of families are taking out student loans to pay for private education. These kind of financing plans had previously not occurred until students were in college.

They stated that it is not just wealthy people who are sending their children to private schools these days. Apparently, some families are incurring debts that may jeopardize their ability to borrow enough for higher education. The authors said that in the last several years the demand for the loans have doubled. But, even families that do not take out loans often find it difficult to pay tuition.

Mr. Comb, The President of Knight College Resource Group, the largest provider of loans and financing plans to private high schools said, "Whether or not a family takes out loans, families make sacrifices to send their kids to private

school. People are making the consumer decision for private over public choices and are willing to be creative to pay for it" (Goldin & Davidson, 1995:19).

Hartman and Chesley (1997) identified guidelines for parents to follow as they decide how to interact with school personnel in times of stress. They suggested that these guidelines be presented to parents at open houses and in newsletters. The authors asserted that strict adherence to these policies would help everyone. They advised parents to establish a relationship with the student's teachers. When dealing with conflict, minor issues can be handled over the phone, but larger concerns are better addressed in person. They said parents should ask themselves what their purpose is before the interaction. Their advice was to approach the conflict from an information gathering perspective. They assured parents that using their name would not have negative consequences for the student, but would lend credibility to their concern.

Hartman and Chesley reminded parents that seldom are issues as simple as they appear at first, and that the best approach by far is to go through the appropriate chain of command. Using prepared notes, parents should approach the teacher first and hear that person out completely. If parents are dissatisfied with the outcome, they should inform the teacher that they intend to speak to the

person next in command. They stated that the administrator would most likely consult with the teacher and other resources before getting back to the parent.

Hartman and Chesley concluded that problems will come up that put parents and staff at odds even when all parties try to avoid such conflicts. Providing parents with a means to work through these difficulties strengthens "the partnerships we are all trying to nurture between the two most important places in a child's life- home and school" (Hartman & Chesley, 1997:84).

Much of the author's research for this practicum project focused on curriculum issues. A great deal has been written about general restructuring and reform issues, as well as addressing the need for change in specific disciplines.

Brady (1996) said "education is not primarily about accumulating knowledge, but about identifying and exploring relationships between various aspects of reality" (Brady, 1996:1). She said a poor curriculum is a dangerous thing, and asserted that the traditional secondary curriculum is a poor curriculum. She explained that the curriculum is poor because it is based on the academic disciplines. She went on to say that the shortcomings inherent in that system are that no philosophical propositions drive the selection of content, and that they are broken up in very arbitrary, artificial ways that belie the way human experiences

are actual encountered. They compete for time and place in the curriculum, and they have become a means to an end instead of truly explaining the real world. Too much time is spent on recall (Brady, 1996:1).

She said that this would not change until what is taught is decided by reason not by tradition. Though the standard disciplines need to remain strong, the new ones need to be encouraged. While she recognized the need for specialized skills in society, she felt it was even more important to have the means of grasping "the totality of experience" (Brady, 1996:8).

Cawelti (1995) discussed curriculum restructuring, stating that 3,380 responses from public and private schools were analyzed in his National Study of High School Restructuring in 1993. It was found that 10 to 15 percent of the nation's high schools are involved in restructuring efforts. However, Cawelti said that the key elements that increase productivity including authentic assessment, interdisciplinary curriculum, block scheduling, community outreach and instructional technology were most often missing from the efforts.

He said that the aforementioned are the elements that must be given top priority for restructuring. Authentic assessment plans developed by the staff including performance exams, projects, and other demonstrations should reinforce

state assessments in many cases. Interdisciplinary teaching provides better opportunities to help students master the huge body of essential knowledge. Cawelti also stressed the need for increased technology in the high school.

Hundt (1996) also asserted the vital nature of providing increased technological studies and availability. He said that the opportunities afforded by the telecommunications revolution should be unlimited in order to improve the lives of children. He made the distinction that each child needs to be taught not only about, but also with the latest technology. He stated that "there is a world of difference between the availability of computers in schools, and...of computers in each classroom" (Hundt, 1996:7). Hundt pointed out that even though the business world is "roaring into the twenty-first-century information age, 50 million children go to school in a nineteenth-century world of chalk-and-blackboard technology" (Hundt, 1996:6).

Fowler (1994) spoke of another pressing concern. He stated that the best schools have the best arts programs. He said that though not always the most expedient method, direct experience is nonetheless the best way to study the world. And even though science and technology are important areas, they do not

tend to the spirit the way the arts do. They are strongly needed to balance the curriculum.

Fowler stated that the arts are important for all students giving them a better understanding of the world, a three-dimensional concept of what is being taught, an expression of diversity, emotion, and creativity, critical thinking, and a focus on humanity. He commented that, "if we fail to touch the humanity of students, we have not really touched them at all. Schools that do not teach the arts are, quite literally, creating a generation that is less civilized than it could be, more barbaric than it should be" (Fowler, 1994:6).

Hurd (1997) discussed the need to reinvent science curricula in a way that will develop higher level thinking skills such as decision making, forming judgments, and resolving problems. He pointed out that these skills depend on the recognition of risks, ethics and the need for appropriate information. He said that this changing emphasis speaks to the optimal use of scientific knowledge in human affairs and is not just for inquiry any more.

Hurd said that to the present time, the primary goal of school science education has been career or higher grade-level preparation. He felt that this goal is very inadequate in today's world. He said that to meet the challenges of our

changing world with all the advances in science and technology, what is required is a "lived" curriculum, one that can be experienced and seen as useable by the student.

Roberts and Kellough (1996) pointed out that teachers are aware that interdisciplinary thematic units play an important role in the quality of learning by students. Yet, teachers may not have the necessary tools at their disposal to approach the creation of such a unit. Therefore, Roberts and Kellough gave a detailed set of exercises and strategies to do just that. They asserted the belief that this instructional technique will literally help define a new level of educational professionalism. They felt that teachers knew that these units provide the most meaningful way to prepare students for the varied requirements for effective living in the twenty-first century. And, the authors felt that their specific approach would be useful in classrooms. Exercises for students and teachers, questions and activities for discussion, and detailed explanations were included.

Smagorinsky (1996) explored Gardner's theories about multiple intelligences. Smagorinsky tried to explain why schools do not take practical classes seriously by saying that they are thought to rely on common sense rather than intelligence. He stated that although Gardner has begun to break into the

mainstream of educational thinking, giving credence to abilities that go beyond verbal and mathematical (adding inter and intra-personal intelligence, spatial, bodily, and musical intelligences) the conservative, middle class teachers have a hard time changing their teaching beyond how they were taught.

Gardner (1996) expanded on his own teachings by first stating his surprise that his multiple intelligences (MI) theory has had so much continued interest. He sought to clarify misunderstandings and dispel myths about the theory. First of all, he said there is no reason to now have seven tests. And, he clarified that an intelligence is not the same as a discipline, craft, or learning style. He said there is not one official Gardner or "MI approach" (Gardner, 1996:2) to schools, and he hoped there never would be. He also asserted that it is completely false to say that he favors less than a very rigorous curriculum. In fact, he strongly supported the standard disciplines, hard work, and regular assessment.

Gardner stated that the seven intelligences are based on explicit criteria, but that assessment of intelligences is not possible. He said that one could assess proficiency in different tasks, and the greater the number of tasks sampled, the more likely that a valid statement could be made about how strong or weak an

intelligence is. He cited numerous examples of practitioners who have worked on enlightening, practical projects inspired by MI theory.

Solution Strategy

Yap's introduction (l991) underscores the author's belief that there is no one best school for everyone, and that choice is essential. Yap correctly stated that choice begets competition, and efficiency is often the spawn of competition. And, it is a powerful catalyst in the pursuit of excellence. Yap also said that there is evidence that choice leads to desirable educational outcomes. First (1990) also highlighted the importance of providing choice in her discussion of public school options. The authors such as Geske, Davis and Hingle (1997) and Nathan (1996) who discussed charter schools showed the benefits of providing a variety of school settings. These illustrations give the author further motivation to help create an excellent new choice in high schools.

The author was very interested in reading about the class size study (Achilles, Boyd, Zaharias and McKenna (1992). It gave much credibility to the high percentage of parents who stated on the high school parent interest survey

used in this practicum project that small class size and student/teacher ratio are critical factors in their choice of a school for their children.

The author has seen many of the recommendations for teaching outlined in Nidds and McGerald (1996) taking place at the target school and; therefore, is enthusiastic about the prospects for an autonomous high school environment. Other information gained, such as what to consider when hiring high school teachers detailed in Huling, Resta, Mandeville and Miller (1996) adds to the author's knowledge of what makes an excellent school.

Also, knowing the reality of parental concerns about tuition as outlined in Goldin and Davidson (1995), and mechanisms for communication with school personnel, illustrated in Hartman and Chesley (1997), will be very useful in the practicum author's leadership role at target school parent and student informational meetings. This will also be helpful to the author as a steering committee member of the Community High School Project.

The many sources that the author consulted about block scheduling, for example Huling, Resta, Mandeville, and Miller (1996), will help provide the expertise needed to be effective when planning such a schedule for the target school with the assistant headmaster. The author has already shared the article

about Horace's Friday by Murdock, Hansen, Kraemer, Vandiver, Hunt, and Hennessy (1995) with him in the hopes that such an exciting plan could be tried at the target school.

Licklider (1997) gave specific information that will provide excellent insights for designing and leading the teacher curriculum workshops at the end of this practicum project. In addition, the many articles and books that the author has been reading about curriculum issues will be invaluable in the planning and execution of these workshops. Of particular interest to the author are those that gave ideas for the implementation of interdisciplinary units, for example Roberts and Kellough (1996), as the target school is desirous of having these units be an important part of the high school program.

Louis, Kruse, and Rayid (1996) commented on the importance of and ways to strengthen the professional teaching community. That is one of the author's intentions for leading the teacher workshops. And, Brooks' and Brooks' (1993) description of a constructivist teacher is information that will be helpful in the motivational component of these workshops.

Finally an appreciation of Gardner's multiple intelligence theory, more fully explained in Smagorinsky (1996) and Gardner (1996) underscores the practicum

author's belief in the potential of every student, and the author's desire to enhance the target school which already excels at fostering individual strengths.

CHAPTER III

Method

For ease in understanding, the author will first discuss aspects of this project in logical subsections. Then, in a timeline, the author will show the progression of the project chronologically. Because of the breadth of the project, it turned out to require more weeks of implementation than originally planned. The author expanded the originally planned 12-week implementation into a 16-week one.

Pre-implementation

Prior to implementation of the project, many discussions were held with the headmaster of the target school. Prior to implementation, permission was obtained from the headmaster and from the board of directors at the target school to proceed with all aspects of the project. Also prior to implementation, the author developed a needs assessment instrument to determine the level of interest of parents in the creation of an independent high school in this locale, and to obtain other input from them about such a school. The author distributed this survey to all parents at the targeted school. Data from this parent interest survey were

aggregated and analyzed. Also, before implementation, the author attended a planning meeting of the newly formed Community High School Project. At this meeting, the author proposed the use of the parent interest survey, and obtained permission from the principals of three other local, independent, elementary/middle schools to distribute the survey to all parents.

Parent Survey

Early in the implementation, the author distributed a parent survey to all parents at these three other independent schools (see Appendix B, p. 104). A parent cover letter of explanation was attached. The author made arrangements with the headmasters for ample time for survey completion and collection, and then collected the completed surveys from each school. The author aggregated and analyzed the data from these surveys (see Appendix E, p. 113). The author combined these data with data collected earlier from the targeted school (see Appendix C, p. 108) and used the information to help create a presentation for the Community High School Project. Later, the author wrote and distributed a follow up letter to the parents at all four schools giving them a summary of pertinent data collected and thanking them again.

Parent Survey Presentation

Using an overhead projector with transparencies and an oral narrative as well as a packet of handouts for participants, the author gave a formal presentation of the parent survey data to the Community High School. Afterwards, the author encouraged comments and questions from the participants and took time to respond to them. The author concluded by having the participants complete an evaluation of the survey and the presentation in an anonymous manner (see Appendix D, p.111).

Admissions Open Houses

The author helped facilitate the Upper School Admissions Open House at the target school in the role of ambassador. As such, the author shared information about the school, its curriculum, and its programs, and anecdotes from experiences with the staff and the school. The author also answered questions from the parents.

Later, at a second Open House, when after whole group presentations prospective parents and students were split into groups, the author co-facilitated the ninth grade meeting with the newly hired teacher for that program. After that

group session, the author gave parents a tour of the facilities and then spoke individually with them.

Parent Informational Meeting

Parents who were specifically interested in more information about the proposed addition of a ninth grade at the target school were invited to an informational meeting with the headmaster, the assistant headmaster, and the author facilitating. The author's responsibility was presenting an overview of the philosophies underlying curriculum choices and the interdisciplinary curriculum that is being planned. The author also explained some of the data from the parent survey. In addition, the author helped clarify the goals of the Community High School Project and the target school's connection to it in starting the pilot high school program. The author then helped field questions from the audience.

Interviews With Headmasters

The author contacted each of the four headmasters in writing before calling to schedule appointments. In the correspondence, the author outlined the purpose of the proposed interviews and outlined the questions that would be discussed. The author followed up the letter with personal phone calls to arrange meetings at

the headmasters' convenience. The author interviewed each of the headmasters in detail and was also given a tour of the two schools that were unfamiliar. The author sent the headmasters a thank you note for their time and cooperation.

Recruitment of Eighth Graders

After consulting with the headmaster at the target school, the author contacted the headmasters at the other three schools to arrange times to meet with their eighth graders. At these meetings, the author co-facilitated (with the assistant headmaster of the target school) a presentation and subsequent question and answer period about the new ninth grade at the target school. The author also invited the students to an upcoming open house at the target school where more of the students' (and their parents') questions could be answered. The author distributed an informational admissions packet to all interested students. The author reported back to the target school headmaster about these meetings.

Community High School Project

During the implementation of this project the author attended seven full group meetings of the Community High School in addition to committee meetings of that group. The author will relate highlights of these two to three hour

meetings in this document. The author joined the group at their second meeting and has been actively involved ever since. The author was informed that the initial meeting was a brainstorming session with a small group where the idea of the creation of a Community High School in this part of town was put forth and accepted. At the author's first meeting, the author proposed the use of the parent survey and this plan was adopted. The author participated in a discussion about the creation of a steering committee in the near future. The group also agreed that each school needed to seek approval from their respective boards of directors for continued involvement in the Community High School Project.

At the second meeting, the author made a presentation of the data from the parent survey (see Appendixes C and E, pp. 108, 113) and the group discussed these findings. Issues such as marketing strategies and possibilities for land acquisition were then addressed. There was a continued discussion of vision. The needs for a governing body and a core group of planners were addressed. The articles of incorporation were adopted.

At the third meeting, the author participated in the detailed examination of the newly formed corporation's bylaws. Additions and corrections were made including the author's suggestions for gender free language. This was the official,

organizational meeting of the corporation where details about the creation of a Board and terms of office were discussed. By acclamation, it was decided that the core group in attendance would be the official Board of Trustees. An election of officers followed. The author was nominated for Secretary of the Board. The author accepted the nomination and later was elected to serve on the Executive Board as Secretary. Committees were then formed and the author agreed to serve on the Property Committee and the Educational Development Committee.

At the fourth meeting, the author began duties as Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the Community High School. Additional members were added to the Board of Trustees and discussion of the Bylaws continued. The author helped give the Education Committee report largely centered on the committee's work on the mission statement. The Development Committee reported on their progress on a promotional brochure. In between meetings, the author researched the correct formatting for meeting minutes (see Bibliography, p. 99). The author prepared and sent out the minutes.

At the fifth meeting, the author continued working as the Secretary of the Board. The author helped give the Property Committee report about the committee work on boundaries, acreage requirements, and a list of proposed sites.

The Development Committee reported on research about a capital campaign. The author also contributed to the Education Committee report about the work refining the mission statement and writing the companion guiding principles. The Board of Trustees officially approved the revised Bylaws. After the meeting, the author prepared and distributed the minutes.

At the sixth meeting, the author continued working as the Secretary of the Board of Trustees. The author presented the Education Committee report detailing work on refining the guiding principles and the beginning of conceptualizing and articulating crucial elements of the high school. The committee was directed by the Board to write a student survey for input into the new school. The Development Committee asked for more input for the brochure. The Property Committee reported that a realtor was now searching for appropriate land within expanded boundaries. Progress on work with potential contributors was reported. After the meeting, the author prepared and distributed the minutes.

At the last meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Community High School during the implementation process, the author continued working as the Secretary of the Board. The Development Committee presented a preliminary brochure. After the report from the Property Committee, it was decided to

investigate smaller pieces of land. The author helped present the Education Committee report which detailed work on writing "the compelling why" and the history of the high school project for the brochure, and the formulation of the student survey of recent high school graduates. The author completed final editing of that survey (see Appendix F, p. 116). The author distributed the student survey to the Board members to be copied, distributed, collected, and returned to the author by the agreed upon date. The Education Committee agreed to write teacher and administrator profiles. After the meeting, the author prepared and distributed the minutes.

Meetings with Headmaster of Targeted School

The author communicated very regularly with the headmaster of the target school during all phases of this project. During implementation, this communication happened at least weekly either by telephone or in meetings. The headmaster was also the mentor for the project. The author arranged for a meeting for a mid-project assessment.

At that meeting, the author reviewed all work completed to date, gave progress reports about undertakings that were ongoing, and made projections

about tasks yet to be started. The author requested that an observation of the newly hired ninth grade teacher be added to the implementation. The author's mentor approved that addition and also asked that the author add participation in a staff goal setting meeting for the 1998 through 1999 school year at the targeted school. The mentor also requested two modifications of the initial project plan.

First of all, the mentor asked that plans to write a specific block schedule be omitted, as it had turned out they would not be scheduling for many months. The mentor suggested that the author substitute participation on the Property Committee that had not been outlined in the project proposal, as well as the aforementioned observation and goal setting meeting.

The mentor also requested additional help with chairing the Education Committee. The mentor requested that the author's leadership role on that committee be substituted for the curriculum workshops outlined in the proposal. The mentor felt that it would be a more useful contribution to the high school effort at this time. The leadership role on this committee could not have been foreseen when writing the proposal for this project. In the lengthy planning session that followed, specific plans were made about the creation of an action

plan for the next Education Committee goal with the author administering the process.

Extensive communication continued throughout implementation of all goals including the new ones outlined above. At the conclusion of the implementation, the author met with the headmaster/mentor for a final discussion of the totality of the project, projections for the future of the high school at the targeted school, and its eventual transfer to The Community High School.

Educational Development Committee

The author worked extensively on the Education Committee of the Community High School during implementation. The author participated in all seven of the meetings that took place during this time with either shared or primary responsibility for leadership. The committee consisted of three headmasters, one middle school principal, three teachers, and several active community members. The author communicated frequently with committee members, reminding them of meetings and giving updates to absent members. Meetings were three to four hours long.

At these meetings many goals were established and accomplished. First there was the writing, refinement, and formatting of a mission statement and guiding principles for the school (see Appendix G, p. 120). Then, for the author's managing interaction competancy requirement, the author lead a discussion about what the next goal should be. Using a Management Action Plan, the author coordinated accomplishment of this goal, which was labeled "conceptualize crucial elements of the Community High School." The author directed the committee members to brainstorm lists of these crucial elements for the next meeting.

The author sent a fax reminding the committee of this commitment and the date of the next committee meeting. At that meeting, using the list, cluster, label steps of the Delphi Dialogue Method for organization, the author had the participants share and compile the lists they had created. At the next full Board meeting, the author gave the education committee report focusing on this latest goal achievement. The author summarized key points of the work that had been done, fielded questions, and invited comments.

At subsequent meetings, discussions focused on how and why this new high school would be unique, and curriculum materials were collected and shared. The committee also wrote more prose for the brochure including "the compelling

why" and a history of the Community High School project. The author participated in the writing of a student survey for input from recent high school graduates and high school seniors. The author did the final editing of that document and was responsible for giving it to the Trustees who then distributed it. At the end of implementation, the author participated in the brainstorming sessions of the Education Committee for the beginning stages of writing a teacher profile for the Community High School.

Property Committee

The author participated in three meetings of the Property Committee of the Community High School. This committee did not meet as often during the time of implementation. The author participated in discussions about ideal locations for the school and adequate acreage requirements. Specific locations were considered, boundaries were set and reset, and realtors were engaged. The author also gave input into specific requirements for the physical property as guidance for the realtor.

Volunteer Coordination

The author worked with the chairperson of the Development Committee of the Community High School to coordinate a plan to utilize parent volunteers. The author had asked for the names of volunteers as part of the parent survey. Because of this, the author had collected many names for use on the high school project. The author transcribed this list and helped compose a letter to these volunteers, thanking them for their interest and inviting them to an informational meeting. The author contributed to the brainstorming of additional community members that would be appropriate to invite to the meeting.

At that meeting, the author participated in the answering of questions about the background and goals of the Board. A volunteer form was filled out by participants to help identify interests and strengths. After the meeting, the author helped draft a thank you letter to the volunteer participants indicating that the Board would contact them at a later date.

Teacher Observation

In order to be more knowledgeable about the direction of the teaching of the new ninth grade, the author elected to observe the newly hired teacher at the

teacher's current school. The teacher agreed and a date and time was set for the observation. The author used a formal classroom observation form and took extensive notes. The author wrote up an observation summary and shared feedback with the teacher.

Goal Setting Meeting

The author participated in the staff meeting that occurred on a planning day at the targeted school. The meeting was for goal setting for the 1998 through 1999 school year. Its purpose was to establish school wide goals for the coming year, focus concentration on the instructional program, and keep the school's vision and philosophy in the forefront. At the meeting, individual department lists were combined using the Delphi Dialogue Method. Out of this list, SMART Goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Result Centered, Time Bound) were discussed. The author participated in the formal discussion as well as having interactions with staff members before and after the meeting.

Timeline

Weeks	Activities
One and two weeks prior	Began formal communication with headmaster (continued throughout). Obtained all required permissions. Developed, administered, and analyzed data from parent interest survey. Began attending planning meetings Community High School Project (continued throughout).
One and two	Distributed, aggregated, and analyzed parent survey at three other local independent schools. Acted as ambassador at middle school admission's open house for prospective parents. Presented curriculum overview at target school's informational meeting.
Three and four	Prepared presentation of survey for Community High School Project committee including evaluation rubric. Gave presentation of survey findings at planning meeting of Community High School Project.
Five, six and seven	Was nominated and elected member of Executive Board of Community High School as Secretary. Began participation in Education and Property Committees of the Board (continued throughout). Interviewed the three other independent school headmasters.
Eight and nine	Scheduled and prepared eighth grade presentations for the other schools. Began implementing volunteer coordination with chairperson of Development Committee (continued throughout).

	Began duties as Secretary of Board of Trustees of the Community High. Prepared and distributed Board meeting minutes for the first time. Began to co-facilitate the Education Committee. Met with headmaster/mentor for mid-project assessment. Made necessary project changes.
10 and 11	Gave presentations to eighth graders about the new ninth grade at target school. Met with the headmaster of the target school to communicate results of these presentations. Continued committee work. Helped lead ninth grade open house at target school.
12, 13, and 14	Continued duties as Secretary of Board. Continued co-facilitation of committees.
15 and 16	Observed and met with newly hired target school ninth grade teacher. Edited and presented for distribution the final version of student survey. Participated in faculty goal setting meeting at targeted school for next year. Participated in first meeting of parent volunteers. Reported and discussed with headmaster/mentor the success of this promotional project and the current status of the addition of a high school program.
Post implementation	Continued and will continue a close working relationship with the target school in their addition of a high school and other projects. Continued and will continue work as Secretary of the Board of Trustees and committee member of the Community High School Project.

CHAPTER IV

Results

Objectives

As stated earlier, it became necessary to expand the implementation of this project from 12 weeks to 16 weeks. During that 16-week implementation period, 277 (77 over the objective of at least 200) parents from independent elementary/middle schools other than the target school provided feedback about their needs for high school education for their children as measured by their return of a completed interest survey (see Appendix B, p. 104) therefore, this objective was met. And, at least 40 percent of these parents indicated a high level of interest in an independent high school in this location as measured by their positive answers to at least two key questions on this interest survey; therefore, this objective was met. To the question "How strongly are you considering continued private education through high school for your student(s)?" 75 percent of responding parents answered "very strongly." And to the question "How important is location to your decision on a choice of high school for your student?" 40 percent answered "very important" (see Appendix E, p. 113).

And, during the 16-week implementation period, the Community High School Committee attended a presentation of parent survey results as measured by the attendance record in the minutes of the meeting; therefore, this objective was met. After the presentation, the committee members demonstrated satisfaction with the survey and the presentation as measured by their comments in a post presentation discussion and by their 12 answers (for example "the survey contained all important components, the presentation was interesting, the visual aids were helpful, the presentation was easily understood, information from the survey and presentation will be useful to share with the parents from my school.") on an evaluation rubric (see Appendix D, p. 111) therefore, this objective was met. (The objective was for them to indicate their satisfaction by giving the presentation a composite score of at least 2.6 out of a possible 4.0 on the rating scale. The actual composite score was 3.9 out of a possible 4.0, far exceeding that objective).

Additionally, during the 16-week implementation period, the majority of eighth grade students from two independent schools attended an informational presentation about the new ninth grade program at the target school as measured by review of an attendance log; therefore, this objective was met. All but five (definitely pre-committed) of these students indicated their possible interest in

attending that ninth grade program based on their request for additional written information to take home to their parents; therefore, this objective was met.

And, during the 16-week implementation, the Education Committee (made up of administrators and teachers) of the Community High School Board of Trustees participated in a series of meetings at which they created a mission statement and a set of companion guiding principles (see Appendix G p.116) as measured by approval of these documents by said Board of Trustees; therefore, this objective was met. Also, The Education Committee, using a management action plan, identified the crucial elements of the Community High School as measured by the acceptance of a committee report of this work to the Board of Trustees shown by meeting minutes; therefore this objective was met.

Process

The author found interactions with parents at the open houses and informational meetings quite interesting. Some parents resented the connection between the target school high school program and the Community High School feeling that the target school should undertake the venture alone. The author was able to help them see the advantages of the connection with a larger endeavor and

also the reality of the likelihood that once the Community High School is established in the same locale, it will be difficult to compete with it. The author was also able to share details and anecdotes with new prospective parents to increase the interest in the school. One concern of prospective high school parents that was difficult to dispel was that of the small student population. The author did point out benefits of this situation.

Involvement in the Community High School project has been very beneficial to the author in gaining understanding of the tasks and challenges inherent in starting and promoting a high school. The parent survey and subsequent presentation of data were very enlightening endeavors. The President of the Board of Trustees used this work of the author's as an example of the type of commitment and follow through that is necessary for the success of the High School project.

The author has learned many practical skills as the Secretary of the Board of Trustees. In addition, the required note taking has lead to a firm grasp of the details of the proceedings as well as an understanding of the overview of goals and accomplishments. As a member of the Executive Committee, the author noticed an increased trust level from other Trustees.

The author's participation and leadership role on the Education Committee was extremely beneficial to growth as an administrator. It was extremely satisfying to begin at the beginning by creating a mission statement. It led to close examination of the author's deeply held beliefs about education. Also, many of that committee's meetings were dinner meetings and conversation prior to specific committee work was very enlightening. Anecdotes from the day or week's events at the schools and how the administrator handled them, as well as their philosophical insights gave the author much to think about.

The biggest obstacle the Community High School has faced is frustration because of lack of immediate financial support. Land that had been thought to be forthcoming for donation turned out not to be. This was a set back. Other financial backing is imminent, but uncertainty has slowed down the process of the Board of Trustees somewhat.

The two eighth grade presentations about the target school ninth grade went well in terms of student interest and involvement. The third school felt that too many of their students had already made commitments to other schools for a presentation from the target school to be effective, and asked that a representative come early in the next school year instead. This timing will definitely be better in

all cases. Unfortunately, solid plans for adding the ninth grade were not in place early enough this year to make presentations to eighth graders in a more timely manner. There was a disappointing lack of attendance of students who had attended the eighth grade presentations at the target school open house for ninth graders.

The author found interaction with the headmaster/mentor to be very enlightening, inspiring, and supportive in all phases as this individual was clearly motivated by a desire to foster growth in the author's administrative abilities as well as to see the project succeed. The process of interviewing the other headmasters was beneficial as well. The author gained much useful insight into the schedule and variety of roles that an independent school administrator has. The author took careful note of some of their day to day challenges spoken of and illustrated during these interviews.

One of the administrators detailed a disciplinary style and method, a piece of which was later illustrated during the session. The author found it fascinating. Another prominent administrator alluded to some frustrations on the job and later it was revealed that the individual's contract was in peril. This in itself was a

lesson to the author about the precarious nature of a position that is directly dependent upon the approval of a Board.

The most dramatic development during implementation was the resignation of the last headmaster of the four schools involved in the project. Although the author had spoken at length to that administrator early in the implementation, this person was impossible to reach for the formal interview. Through the Education Committee, the author had much interaction with one of the principals from the same school who said the headmaster was very busy with becoming a not for profit school instead of a proprietorship. The principal was unaware of any other problem. However, it became known, in stages, that the school was in financial ruin.

During implementation, the doors of the school almost closed, but some motivated parents kept it afloat with substantial financial contributions. The headmaster resigned from the school and from the Board of Trustees of the Community High School. The aforementioned principal was appointed the new headmaster and plans are underway for the school to continue in the next school year, but with a dramatically reduced student population.

Many of the students leaving that school enrolled at the targeted school. Though the target school can accommodate this growth, the large influx of inquiries, and enrollees all at once put a large strain on the staff. Energy was diverted away from the efforts to begin the high school program at the school. Consequently, the high school program, though it is still starting in the fall of 1998, has many fewer students then hoped for in the first year of its existence.

Because of the large increase in student population in the lower grades and the small number of ninth graders starting in the beginning of the 1998 through 1999 school year, the target school faculty goal setting meeting at the end of implementation focused primarily on the elementary and middle school programs. But, the fact that the new teacher for the high school will be starting immediately will help get the high school program, though small, off to a good start. That teacher has as priorities making the ninth grade program separate and excellent. The author's formal observation of the teacher and work together on the Education Committee leads the author to believe this is possible.

The author has been discussing and working on the creation and promotion of a high school program at the target school for a year and has seen an idea become a reality. Though the program is starting out small, it is nonetheless

starting. In addition, the Community High School project has made substantial progress. It is the author's belief that both of these endeavors will have ultimate success and that the target school high school program will transfer to the Community High School as planned.

CHAPTER V

Recommendations

This project can be used as a resource for others who seek to add a high school program to an existing independent elementary/middle school or create a complete independent high school. Insights can be gained from the author's promotional and organizational activities in these endeavors.

Starting a new independent high school is even more complicated than the author anticipated. There is no set formula to prescribe or follow because the possible variables are too wide. But, the author has learned a great deal about the process.

The author learned that talent and creative resources are not enough in themselves. Lack of timely funding, though not an insurmountable problem, can be very discouraging to the momentum of the project. And the author learned that unexpected circumstances, like the near closing of another independent school can affect plans significantly. Adding a high school program at an existing independent school can become a lower priority when faced with sudden expansion of student population in current programs.

Therefore, the author's biggest recommendation is to be ready to combine perseverance with patience in the pursuit of these substantial goals. Enthusiasm and vision alone do not create independent high schools. Even very hard work will not be enough. Many factors need to be considered and balanced.

The author has no doubt that the precarious fate of the other independent school in this locale had an impact on the development of the high school program at the targeted school. And, the involvement (many hours of effort and focus) of the target school in working on the Board of Trustees of the Community High School to create the separate high school has had a large effect as well. The plan to be the pilot program for the larger one is even more important now. The target school will not be in the best position to move students starting in ninth grade this year effectively all the way through twelfth. Now that it actually has high school students, the target school has even more at stake in seeing the Community High School succeed. Since joining force with that effort, the target school has seen its best role as being the seedling program for the Community High School.

The Community High School Board of Trustees has its own important motivations for seeking success. Moving ahead now with even more rapidity and

direction would be very advantageous. It must, with the Development Committee, focus on seeking substantial funding. And, it is time for renewed goal setting from each of the committees using an action plan that can be shared with the rest of the Board. It is nearing the time to employ professionals to develop the plans of the Trustees (who are volunteering their work on the project in addition to holding responsible positions elsewhere in education and the greater community). And, the coordination of parent volunteers that the author began needs to be expanded. These additional factors combined with the significant progress that has already been made by very respected and motivated individuals will ensure the future of an independent high school in this locale with students who began in the target high school program among its first graduates.

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Appendixes

Appendix A

Letter from Headmaster of Target School to Founder
of Community High School Project Committee

Appendix A

Stanford R. Solomon
3000 Nationsbank Plaza
400 North Ashley Drive
Tampa, Florida 33602-4300

Dear Sandy

I really enjoyed the meeting on October 7th. I found the exchange to be exciting and the prospect of an independent high school in northern Hillsborough closer to reality. The Academy at the Lakes must address concerns with you prior to pledging our full commitment to this project.

As you are aware, we have been planning to phase-in a high school program for the past year. We are scheduled to inaugurate high school with grade 9 in the Fall of 1998. We have recruited students, talked to parents, made announcements, issued press releases, etc. The major reasons for our implementation of grades 9-12 are as follows:

1. A major donor to Academy at the Lakes wants the school to have a high school program in place by the time his children are ready to attend high school. This agreement was made in between the school and the donor in June 1995.

2. Prospective parents are reluctant to begin their child(ren) hero in middle school and face the chore of going through the selection process (trauma) all over again when the high school years arrive.

3. Our school community exerts a great deal of pressure on the school for a high school at ALDS.

4. We have experienced a great deal of growth and program success over the past 5 years due largely to programmatic design. ALDS is a research based school. Our approaches are nontraditional.

The high school project intrigues me. I am flattered that ALDS may be a part of the development of this entity. In order for ALDS to fully participate while honoring previous commitments I propose the following:

1. ALDS would serve as the "pilot" site for the high school program. Members of the other schools are invited to assist with the development and implementation of the program, conduct program evaluations, and participate in curriculum development. The pilot program will allow ALDS the opportunity to honor the commitment for the implementation of a high school program.

2. The high school will operate at ALDS until the new high school opens. At that point students and staff would transfer from ALDS to the new high school. In actuality transfer students would be entering their sophomore or junior years.

3. ALDS will fully explain the transfer process to prospective families and current families. All parties will be apprised of the fact that our engagement with a high school program will terminate once the proposed school opens.

4. Upon the opening of the new high school ALDS will discontinue high school offerings. We will market the proposed high school as an extension of our program located on another campus.

I wanted to share this information with you prior to the meeting on October 20. Due to the competitive nature of the independent school market I feel that the above proposal may be better presented by someone other than myself. Please let me know your thoughts.

Sincerely,

Richard J. Wendick
Headmaster

Richard J. Wendick, Headmaster
Loren Hoffman Smolker, Assistant Headmaster
2420 Collier Parkway • Land O' Lakes, Florida 34639 • (813) 948-2133 • Fax (813) 949-0663

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Appendix B

Independent High School Parent Interest Survey

Appendix B

New North Suburban Independent High School - Parent Interest Survey

I am the parent of a middle school student, working on a research practicum project for my Educational Specialist degree.

The purpose of this survey is to determine the interest of parents of existing students at this school in the development of an independent high school in this area. This information will be used as part of a feasibility study for the creation of a new high school.

Please answer the following questions in the space provided:

1. What are the ages of your children at the school? _____
2. What are the grades of your children at the school? _____
3. How long have you had children at this school? _____
4. What other private schools have your children attended? _____

Please answer the following questions by circling the appropriate response:

5. How strongly are you considering continued private education through high school for your student(s)?	Very Strongly	Somewhat Strongly	Not Strongly
6. How strongly would you consider sending your student to a high school in its first year of existence?	Very Strongly	Somewhat Strongly	Not Strongly
7. How strongly would you consider sending your student to a high school in its second or third year of existence?	Very Strongly	Somewhat Strongly	Not Strongly
8. How important is a college preparatory curriculum to your decision on a choice of high school for your student?	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important

9. In addition to the core curriculum, how important are the following programs to your decision on a choice of high school for your student?:

Fine Arts	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Athletics	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Clubs	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Travel Opportunities	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Cooperative Interscholastic Programs (domestic and foreign)	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Classical Language Studies	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Debate and Forensics	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Technological Studies	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
10. How important is location to your decision on a choice of high school for your student?	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
11. How important is tuition cost to your decision on a choice of high school for your student?	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
12. How important is student/teacher ratio to your decision on a choice of high school for your student?	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
13. What do you consider the ideal size for a high school?	Less than 100	101 - 300	300 - 600

Please answer the following questions by circling Yes or No:

14. Would you be interested in reading the findings of a feasibility study for a new high school on the suburban north end of the city?	Yes	No
15. Would you be willing to donate any time as a volunteer on this project?	Yes	No

If yes, please provide your name, and phone number:

Name:_____

Phone:_____

All completed surveys are very appreciated. Thank you very much for your participation.

Please return completed surveys to the school office by <<date>>.

Appendix C

Survey Results – Target School

Appendix C

New North Suburban Independent High School - Parent Interest Survey

ALDS Results

Age Ranges	Less Than 5	5	*4.13%*
	5 To 10	80	*66.12%*
	11 Or Older	36	*29.75%*
Grade Ranges	Kindergarten or Younger	16	*13.22%*
	Elementary Grades	74	*61.16%*
	Middle School	31	*25.62%*
How Long have had Children attending	2 Years or Less	51	*57.95%*
	3 to 4 Years	29	*32.95%*
	5 or More Years	8	*9.09%*
Have Attended Other Private School		0	

Considering High School	Not Strongly		Somewhat Strongly		Very Strongly	
How strongly are you considering continued private education through high school for your student(s)?	9	*10.23%*	26	*29.55%*	53	*60.23%*
How strongly would you consider sending your student to a high school in its first year of existence?	26	*29.89%*	43	*49.43%*	18	*20.69%*
How strongly would you consider sending your student to a high school in its second or third year of existence?	9	*10.34%*	42	*48.28%*	36	*41.38%*

Curriculum Issues:

	Not Important		Somewhat Important		Very Important	
How important is a college preparatory curriculum to your decision on a choice of high school for your student?	1	*1.18%*	10	*11.76%*	74	*87.06%*
In addition to the core curriculum, how important are the following programs to your decision on a choice of high school for your student?:						
Fine Arts	3	*3.41%*	35	*39.77%*	50	*56.82%*
Athletics	11	*12.50%*	31	*35.23%*	46	*52.27%*
Clubs	9	*10.34%*	48	*55.17%*	30	*34.48%*
Travel Opportunities	29	*32.95%*	51	*57.95%*	8	*9.09%*
Cooperative Interscholastic Programs (domestic and foreign)	26	*29.89%*	49	*56.32%*	12	*13.79%*

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New North Suburban Independent High School - Parent Interest Survey

ALDS Results						
Classical Language Studies	8	9.30%	37	43.02%	41	47.67%
Debate and Forensics	10	11.49%	45	51.72%	32	36.78%
Technological Studies	5	5.68%	21	23.86%	62	70.45%

Other Issues:

	Not Important		Somewhat Important		Very Important	
How important is location to your decision on a choice of high school for your student?	5	5.75%	47	54.02%	35	40.23%
How important is tuition cost to your decision on a choice of high school for your student?	5	5.68%	37	42.05%	46	52.27%
How important is student/teacher ratio to your decision on a choice of high school for your student?	1	1.14%	14	15.91%	73	82.95%
	Less than 100		101 - 300		301 - 600	
What do you consider the ideal size for a high school?	15	17.86%	56	66.67%	13	15.48%

Participation:

	Yes		No	
Would you be interested in reading the findings of a feasibility study for a new high school on the suburban north end of the city?	63	71.59%	25	28.41%
Would you be willing to donate any time as a volunteer on this project?	11	12.50%	77	87.50%

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Appendix D

Evaluation Rubric for Survey Results Presentation

Appendix D

Evaluation Rubric for Parent High School Survey/Presentation

1. The goals of the parent high school survey were clear.	Strongly Agree *(36)*	Somewhat Agree *(0)*	Mildly Agree *(2)*	Don't Agree *(0)*
2. The survey contained all important components.	Strongly Agree *(32)*	Somewhat Agree *(6)*	Mildly Agree *(0)*	Don't Agree *(0)*
3. The survey was easy to complete.	Strongly Agree *(40)*	Somewhat Agree *(0)*	Mildly Agree *(0)*	Don't Agree *(0)*
4. The presentation was interesting.	Strongly Agree *(36)*	Somewhat Agree *(3)*	Mildly Agree *(0)*	Don't Agree *(0)*
5. The presentation was well organized.	Strongly Agree *(40)*	Somewhat Agree *(0)*	Mildly Agree *(0)*	Don't Agree *(0)*
6. The presentation was easily understood.	Strongly Agree *(40)*	Somewhat Agree *(0)*	Mildly Agree *(0)*	Don't Agree *(0)*
7. The presentation was an appropriate length.	Strongly Agree *(36)*	Somewhat Agree *(3)*	Mildly Agree *(0)*	Don't Agree *(0)*
8. The presentation was complete.	Strongly Agree *(32)*	Somewhat Agree *(3)*	Mildly Agree *(2)*	Don't Agree *(0)*
9. The visual aids were helpful.	Strongly Agree *(36)*	Somewhat Agree *(3)*	Mildly Agree *(0)*	Don't Agree *(0)*
10. Information from the survey and presentation will be useful to the board of directors at my school.	Strongly Agree *(32)*	Somewhat Agree *(6)*	Mildly Agree *(0)*	Don't Agree *(0)*
11. Information from the survey will be useful to share with the parents from my school.	Strongly Agree *(36)*	Somewhat Agree *(3)*	Mildly Agree *(0)*	Don't Agree *(0)*
12. Information from the survey and presentation will be useful to the steering committee of the Community High School Project.	Strongly Agree *(32)*	Somewhat Agree *(6)*	Mildly Agree *(0)*	Don't Agree *(0)*

Evaluation results noted in each cell. Results are weighted scores (Strongly Agree = 4, Somewhat Agree = 3, Mildly Agree = 2, Don't Agree = 1).

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Appendix E

Survey Results – Composite

Appendix E

New North Suburban Independent High School - Parent Interest Survey

Composit Results

Age Ranges	Less Than 5	48	*9.30%*
	5 To 10	327	*63.37%*
	11 Or Older	141	*27.33%*
Grade Ranges	Kindergarten or Younger	116	*22.35%*
	Elementary Grades	278	*53.56%*
	Middle School	125	*24.08%*
How Long have had Children attending	2 Years or Less	174	*48.07%*
	3 to 4 Years	111	*30.66%*
	5 or More Years	77	*21.27%*
Have Attended Other Private School		154	

Considering High School	Not Strongly		Somewhat Strongly		Very Strongly	
How strongly are you considering continued private education through high school for your student(s)?	26	*7.12%*	64	*17.53%*	275	*75.34%*
How strongly would you consider sending your student to a high school in its first year of existence?	112	*30.85%*	163	*44.90%*	88	*24.24%*
How strongly would you consider sending your student to a high school in its second or third year of existence?	39	*10.74%*	147	*40.50%*	177	*48.76%*

Curriculum Issues:

	Not Important		Somewhat Important		Very Important	
How important is a college preparatory curriculum to your decision on a choice of high school for your student?	1	*0.28%*	23	*6.35%*	338	*93.37%*
In addition to the core curriculum, how important are the following programs to your decision on a choice of high school for your student?						
Fine Arts	17	*4.58%*	126	*33.96%*	228	*61.46%*
Athletics	24	*6.59%*	141	*38.74%*	199	*54.67%*
Clubs	35	*9.64%*	194	*53.44%*	134	*36.91%*
Travel Opportunities	100	*27.62%*	201	*55.52%*	61	*16.85%*
Cooperative Interscholastic Programs (domestic and foreign)	77	*21.39%*	196	*54.44%*	87	*24.17%*

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New North Suburban Independent High School - Parent Interest Survey

Composit Results

Classical Language Studies	24	6.65%	137	37.95%	200	55.40%
Debate and Forensics	31	8.59%	193	53.46%	137	37.95%
Technological Studies	13	3.59%	89	24.59%	260	71.82%

Other Issues:

	Not Important		Somewhat Important		Very Important	
How important is location to your decision on a choice of high school for your student?	24	6.61%	195	53.72%	144	39.67%
How important is tuition cost to your decision on a choice of high school for your student?	31	8.52%	205	56.32%	128	35.16%
How important is student/teacher ratio to your decision on a choice of high school for your student?	2	0.55%	37	10.16%	325	89.29%

	Less than 100		101 - 300		301 - 600	
What do you consider the ideal size for a high school?	21	5.92%	205	57.75%	129	36.34%

Participation:

	Yes		No	
Would you be interested in reading the findings of a feasibility study for a new high school on the suburban north end of the city?	290	79.45%	75	20.55%
Would you be willing to donate any time as a volunteer on this project?	78	21.37%	287	78.63%

	Distributed	Returned	Percentage
Survey Return Rate	1119	365	32.62%

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Appendix F

Student Survey

Appendix F

Student Survey

The following survey was developed by the Education Committee of the Community High School of North Tampa, Inc., to gain insight into your high school experiences. This will assist a group of educators and parents who are creating a new independent high school in our area.

We greatly appreciate your cooperation in filling out this survey. We are seeking the input of young adults in the creation of this school. If you would like to be involved in further planning, please call Janice Nepon-Sixt 265-2545. Thank you!

STUDENT SURVEY

High School Attended (Optional)_____

1. What was great about your high school building and facilities?

2. What was lacking in the building and facilities?

3. What was your most memorable experience at your high school?

4. What was your worst experience at your high school?

5. What qualities did you admire in your favorite teacher?

6. What disappointed or aggravated you about any of your teachers?

7. What specific courses or extracurricular activities were not available?

8. What features of the daily/weekly schedule did you like?

9. What features of the daily/weekly schedule did you dislike?

10. What would have improved your high school experience?

11. We are trying to create the "perfect" high school. What ideas/suggestions do you have for it?

Thank you for your time. Trustees of the Community High School of North Tampa, Inc.

Appendix G

Mission Statement and Guiding Principles

Appendix G

MISSION STATEMENT

Community High School of North Tampa is a unique learning community dedicated to providing challenging academics and cultural opportunities with a sensitivity to individual differences which promotes spirituality, integrity, and social consciousness.

Guiding Principles

Students learn within an integrated college preparatory curriculum.
Students and teachers actively participate in cooperative learning experiences.
Students learn to utilize current information technologies.
Students use community resources to experience first-hand learning.

Students develop their individual strengths and talents.
Students acquire the confidence, skills, and knowledge to assume leadership roles.
Students engage in a variety of cultural and artistic endeavors.
Students enhance their physical well being and sense of sportsmanship through athletic pursuits.

Students strengthen their moral and ethical values.
Students gain an appreciation for the dignity and worth of each human being.
Students explore their own heritage and religious traditions.
Students interact with the larger community through service to others.